

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the specification by inserting, before page 1, line 1 after "SPECIFICATION"
the following:

RELATED APPLICATIONS

“The present invention is a divisional of U.S. Patent Application Serial No.
09/860,075, filed May 17, 2001.--

Please add the following new paragraph on page 2 after paragraph [0006]:

[0006.1] In a second, forming step, the rubber composition obtained at the end
of the first step is extruded in order to obtain a cross-linkable, expandable support blank of
predetermined form.

Please replace paragraph [0029] at page 7 with the following amended paragraph:

[0029] According to one embodiment of the invention, this cross-linking and
expansion process may consist:

- in a first step, of subjecting said or each cross-linkable, expandable blank to
said cross-linking in order to obtain a practically cross-linked, expandable blank, then
- in a second step, of subjecting said or each blank which is practically cross-
linked and expandable which is obtained following said first [[stage]] step to said expansion,
in order to obtain all or part of said corresponding cross-linked, expanded safety support.